

BCM

A Belgian J-culture Magazine
Nr 8: September - October 2012

HALLOWEEN
FASHION FEATURE

*Angelic Pretty
tea party*

Japan Expo Paris

Atsusacon

Momodocon

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INORAN

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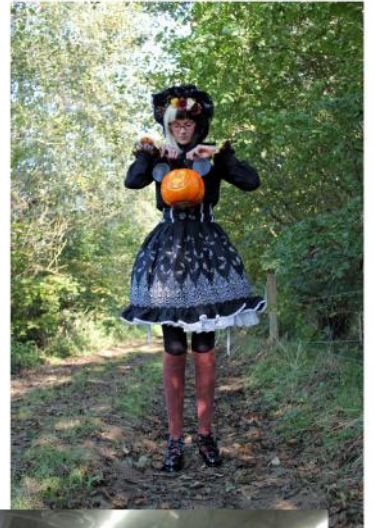
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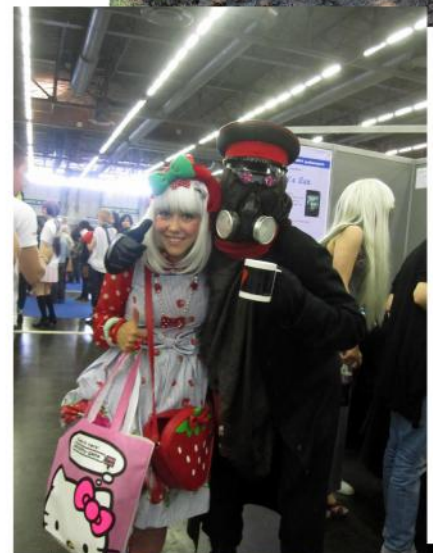
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 8th edition of BCM! Bringing you all a whole slew of interesting (well according to us at least) news about Japanese or Japan themed events in Belgium or attended by Belgians from this teeny tiny country at the heart of Europe, as well as a whole variety of other things.

For the first time ever we have a Halloween edition, focussing our J-fashion Style Focus on making your Lolita fashion outfits rise to the occasion. We also have a Halloween fashion spread because you know, Halloween is coming. And for those with kids, as usual we have a colouring page to keep your kids busy whilst you read (also suitable for the young at heart feeling like colouring of course).

Whilst we're on the topic of Lolita fashion: make sure to read the interview with Dutch duo Katie and Eline of Fly Away Fashion, who are not just an indi brand but also organisers of Lolita Tea Parties.

Aside from the theme and fashion we also have music!

This month we not only reviewed various Japanese musicians and bands, but we also spoke to Xavier Norindr of Bishi-Bishi, talking about the record company side of the music industry. And of course the J-music Corner wouldn't be the J-music Corner without interviews with rocking artists. We not only spoke to up and coming London based J-rock band Esprit D'Air but also to a J-rocker who's been a celebrated solo artist since 1997 and about to embark on his first European tour: INORAN.

All of this and much more in this edition, which I hope you enjoy!

Hilde Heyvaert
Chief editor

EDITORIAL

*Or better said: all the wonderful people who helped put this magazine together.
Thanks guys, I couldn't have done it without you!*

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This is Halloween ... fashion

Halloween, that horror-yet-all-in-good-fun holiday at the very tail end of October, with its customary dress and decorations, bringing everyone in the atmosphere of scary tricks, yet most of all treats. And not all of those are edible, oh no, there's also the wearable kind, and those are exactly what this article is about.

Everyone knows the term holiday Lolita; you go about and dress up holiday themed. It goes for any kind of holiday of course, but for this particular one we're focussing on Halloween as it's a far more diverse holiday than most of the others when it comes to turning it into an outfit. With the rest it's a matter of how much of the holiday you want to bring into what you're wearing, whether you want to keep it casual or go all out over the top. With Halloween, there's the addition of the costume and frightfully fun times to take into account.

Of course we all know the traditional main Halloween colours are black and orange, and if you want to put a coord together with these, by all means go for it. If orange suits you then opportunities are abundant. Do bear in mind that you will likely sew your own pieces or have them commissioned because orange is not a popular Lolita colour and getting your hands on it can be a bit daunting, if you want an orange dress, JSK or skirt at least, other pieces you may be able to find off brand.

Whilst we're on the topic of sewing, plenty of fabric stores stock up on some fabulous Halloween prints, so whilst several brands such as *Angelic Pretty*, *Baby, the Stars Shine Bright* and *Alice and the Pirates* release a Halloween print (almost) yearly, there is a DIY alternative for those on a tighter budget or simply wanting something else than the designs offered by the brands.

Now that we have the traditional avenues covered, there is more to this particular holiday fashion than colours and prints on theme. You could also dress up as a character to do with Halloween. Whilst creatures such as witches and vampires are the most traditional, the sky is the proverbial limit, just like with normal Halloween costumes. You may decide to dress up as your favourite character and step right into the realms of fandom Lolita, which is also perfectly acceptable for Halloween.

The trick to getting that right is to have a good look at the character you are starting from. What is key to their ensemble? Be it a print, a certain garment or accessory or a colour scheme. Make sure to incorporate this to make sure that people know whom you are representing. Of course if you choose a lesser known character you still may have to explain what's going on but that's beside the point. Aside from making sure these key parts are present in your outfit, make sure to adhere to the basic Lolita fashion rules of the style you are going for.

Still in need of ideas or inspiration? Check out our Halloween fashion spread for some examples of Halloween Lolita outfits and costumes.

Gothic Lolita with Halloween accessories such as candy corn coloured hair flowers and wristcuffs.



The Witch, the Black Cat and the Apple Tree.
2011 Halloween series by Alice and the Pirates.



Margot of Camille et Margot as a Classic Lolita
Slytherin Death Eater from the Harry Potter book series.



Halloween is coming!

Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and caldron bubble.
Halloween, the feast of happy
horror and it's matching
fashions. Dress to bewitch,
trick or treat or simply have
a frightfully good time!

Headbow, House of Secrets
Incorporated €15.
Plush bat bag, Anna Club
Plush for WWF.
Bracelets, Angelic Pretty, House
of Secrets Incorporated and
Decathlon.
Candy corn coloured knitted scarf,
House of Secrets Incorporated.
Longsleeved top, H&M, €9,99.
Skirt, House of Secrets
Incorporated.



Headbow with
Halloween print,
Design by Saltje, € 15
Scarf, **Veritas**, € 7,95
Cardigan, **Vero Moda**, € 24,95
Top, **H&M**, € 9,95
Cotton bellskirt with lace
and Halloween
print, **Design by Saltje**, € 45
Socks with ribbon detail,
Hunkemöller, € 6,95
Woolen legwarmers with
silver thread, **Disneyland
Resort Paris**, € 15,95
Heeled boots,
Van Daele, € 139,95



Red headbow, Alice and the Pirates. Creepy eyes, doll's head and other (hair) accessories, **model's own**. Little wicker basket and doll, **thrifted**. Dress, Emily Temple Cute. Leatherette heeled shoes with bows, Secret Shop, € 44,84.

A woman with long blonde hair and glasses is posing in a modern, brightly lit hallway. She is wearing a black cardigan over a dark brown blouse with a pussybow collar and gold buttons. Her skirt is orange with a black cat and jack-o'-lantern print, and a black lace-trimmed petticoat is visible underneath. She is also wearing black sheer tights with a small heart pattern and orange patterned spats with black buttons. On her feet are brown leather shoes with a bow detail. She has a black headband with a pumpkin clip, a black bat-shaped bag with a brown plush cat, and several Halloween-themed accessories including bracelets, cuffs, rings, and brooches. She is making a peace sign with her right hand and gesturing with her left hand.

Headbow, **Accessorize**, € 8,50.
Pumpkin clip on bow, **House of Secrets Incorporated**.
Cardigan, **Hema**, € 26,50.
Chiffon blouse with polkadots and pussybow collar, **H&M**, € 9,99.
Waistcoat, **House of Secrets Incorporated**.
Halloween themed bracelets, cuffs, rings and brooches: **House of Secrets Incorporated**.
Bangle with rhinestones, **Sonia Rykiel pour H&M**.
Plush bat bag, **Anna Club Plush for WWF**.
Cotton skirt with black cats and jack o' lantern print, **House of Secrets Incorporated**.
Petticoat under the skirt, **American Apparel**, € 76.
Heart print sheer nylons, **New Look**, € 2,50.
Cotton pumpkin print spats with leather look buttons, **House of Secrets Incorporated**.
Leatherette shoes with bow detail, **Secret Shop**, €45,76.



*Brooms just
aren't
what they used to be...*

Hairpiece, Made by Claire
Necklace, Claire's, € 9,99
Dress, Fanplusfriend, € 91,98
Blouse, NafNaf, € 29,90
Tights, model's own
Shoes, Irregular Choice, € 89

Woolfelt hat, Asos, € 35
Geek glasses, Theo, € 350
Oversized 4th Doctor
style scarf, H&M, € 5
Chiffon blouse, Asos, € 43
Striped denim waistcoat,
House of Secrets
Incorporated, € 50
Skirt with clockwork
print, House of Secrets
Incorporated, € 45
Petticoat, American
Apparel, € 76
Tights, Insua, € 11
Suede boots,
Schuh, € 72

Trust me, I'm the Doctor



Vief and Annso twinning

Photographic impressions of JAPAN EXPO PARIS

JULY 5 - 8

by Vief Cornilissen and Annso Vermeulen



Lockshop wigs



Cosplayers



Angelic Pretty designers Maki and Asuka



Sweet Lolitas



Classic Lolita



Vief in Pop fashion



Poster €8



Samurai

Photographic impressions of the **ANGELIC PRETTY PARIS TEA PARTY**

Monday, July 9 - Paris - France



Birds and pearls as hair accessories



A more retro style of Lolita



Princesse Pudding



Some of the guests, in different styles of Sweet Lolita



Pink glasses make for excellent accessories to go with OTT Sweet Lolita



Lunie from Belgium



Hoa from Germany's Candy Day Lolita group



Some of the guests with Angelic Pretty designers Maki and Asuka



Aniso and Vief, twinning Chocolate Chess

Event: Atsusacon
When: July 14 and 15
What: J-culture convention
Where: Antwerp Expo
Antwerp, Belgium
Ticket price: ranging from € 8 to € 15
depending on the type of ticket
Website: www.atsusacon.be



Members of the Belgian Cupcakes at Atsusacon.



Plushies for sale at one of the stands.



Awaiting the start of the Cosplay competition.



Sunday's best costume winner.

It's quite obvious that the organisation took the reviews of the 1st edition of Atsuacon, both good and bad to heart because this year's event was a far better convention than the previous one. Not only was it far larger, with the large hall downstairs for video games, artists and vendors. Yes the offer was limited, but this is a con in full growth and I think they made the most of the means at their disposal.

What I liked a lot was the division of everything happening. With the aforementioned downstairs there were also the upstairs events in separate colour coded rooms. This way you had a separate location for food, workshops, taiko drums, card games and then another one for martial arts demos and the cosplay competition + photobooth.

Speaking of the cosplayers: there were some seriously awesome costumes this year. Too bad only few of them entered the competition as there were some really epic get-ups that would have done really well in it. And now that I've brushed the subject of the cosplay competition, that was the only thing about Atsusacon that I really disliked. The costumes and acts of the participants were all worthwhile, fun and well-thought out. The judging seemed fair so no problem there either. The problems were the following: first of all the literally headache (thankfully I packed Aspirine Instant because I needed it afterwards) inducing volume. This isn't an issue limited to this con (it's a malaise that also strikes e.g. FACTS) but seriously people, there is really no reason to be this loud. Remember: the louder the initial volume is set, the louder the crowd will get and deafening is just NOT a good sound level. Ever. Secondly: the presentation was not what it should have been. Sure if you're into pubescent potty humour I'm sure it was hilarious but otherwise it was beyond obnoxious. And yes, some people reacted, mostly with equally low rent comments, which sadly ended in the presenter playing a game of "feeding the trolls" and needlessly dragging things along, to the dismay of the vast majority of the crowd. It's not because a couple of people are laughing that it's funny, just saying. Certainly the overdose of references to all kinds of sex and the yaoi style dry humping on stage was infantile and so far from amusing that amusing is a planet in another galaxy. No one with a mental age older than 15 (at best) truly enjoyed the presentation. Oh and the people shouting "get on with it" during the prize announcement weren't making Monty Python references. Nor were they bantering with the presenter. They really wanted him to get on with it. So please, for the next edition: turn down the volume to an acceptable level and find someone to present the competition in a mature and professional manner. It'll be so much more enjoyable and so much better in general.

The last issue is something that has absolutely nothing to do with the organisation and they have no fault in this what so ever. Let's be clear about this. Nevertheless I think it's something worth mentioning as it's a potential recipe for problems. This year the Antwerp Expo cloakroom was open. Basically you pay € 1 per item you leave behind in the guarded cloakroom and that's it. In reality it wasn't guarded at all. People that had a cloakroom ticket were allowed to just go in and rummage around in good faith because the staff was basically too lazy to do their job properly. Now I have no doubt that the vast majority of people are good folk that don't lift a finger to stuff that isn't their own but it only takes one proverbial rotten apple for things to get stolen. So a word of caution for next edition: be mindful of what you leave in the cloakroom as it may only be guarded in theory.

Aside from those two downsides the second edition of Atsusacon was a really fun and quite a good one.

Great to hang out at, fantastic atmosphere (aside from that of the cosplay competition at least) and a friendly staff doing their utmost. Sure the convention is definitely still growing but it's showing a clear improvement. I have no doubt that this con could rise to become one of the great ones in Belgium, if not in Europe. I know I look forward to the next edition!

Bar and dining area organised by Atsusacon in one of the meeting rooms.



The dealer room.



Hanging out with friends, always an important part of any convention.



During the weekend of the 14th and the 15th of July there was the **second edition of Atsusacon** in Antwerp Expo. This up and coming convention started out very small last year at the same location and the opinions were very divided. With the prospect of a bigger convention and the general curiosity to see how much Atsusacon had grown since last year, I was there on Sunday.

Though the convention was still small when compared to others in Belgium, it **sure had improved quite a lot**. The dealer room had moved to a ground floor hall and there were more dealers than the year before. On the first floor of the *Meeting Center* there was the stage, together with the *Judo* and *Shiatsu* massages. Then on the second floor there was the *Japanese Cultural Center* with workshops and *taiko* concerts, together with a bar from the convention itself.

*“definitely a step
in the right
direction”*

I heard from other people that Sunday wasn't as busy as Saturday, but that didn't mean that it wasn't fun. It was nice to see friends again and to be able to talk a bit in the hallways without getting run over all the time or having to shout.

Atsusacon has definitely grown during this one year and it was certainly a step into the right direction. I only think that it would be fun if it were possible to decorate the hall on the ground floor a bit, since it was a bit grey and boring. But it's definitely going the right way and I hope that the convention will be able to grow a lot more.



Vive le Royaume!
The annual Belgian national holiday meet on July 21

Annual military display in BXL



Our reporter Claire in the MiM.



Some of the holiday crowds.

Which city would be better to celebrate our national holiday than the capital: Brussels? The weather was nice, the train was on time and I was too late. Thank you grandma! After many attempts I managed to let the others know I was late and after a crowded train ride to Brussels-Central I rushed myself to the **MIM**.

The Art-Nouveau architecture of the building is marvellous! The first thing you see is the original art-deco facade, it's impossible to miss. Although it was kind of difficult to find a way to the entrance with those tanks demonstrating their abilities in front of the building. A noisy hall welcomes you when you enter. People buying tickets, telling the wardrobe ladies what to do and hording in front of the elevator. A nice man behind the desk asked me where I'm from, when I told him I'm Belgian he almost didn't believe me. I found the other girls on the first floor, luckily they didn't get too far. After a warm welcome we walked through the exhibition hall. Every floor has a theme, there's instruments worldwide, wind instruments, string instruments and a separate hall for pianos. There were some really impressive pieces, like ancient Chinese bells and a beautiful French harp.

Inside the architecture was just as beautiful as on the outside. The rooms had big arched windows which let in just enough light, there was an ancient, scholarly atmosphere, like the one you get in one of those old libraries. I think it was on the second floor we found the perfect room for outfit shots. It was a bright, cream coloured room with a parquet floor, big classic mirrors and gold details. First the single shots, then small groups and finally Bert was so nice to take the big group shot. We continued our tour, trying not to get too annoyed by the small Chinese children pawing the 300 year old pianos.

We gathered our coats and umbrellas at the wardrobe and went **into the vibrant tourist centre**.

Before entering the centre we passed this tiny museum, the **Museum of Costume and Lace**, that was showing an exhibition on 18th century clothing. Marvellous! The entrance price wasn't that much so we all went in. The exhibition was an inspiration, with magnificent dresses, delicate lace and adorable parasols. Everything a lady needs. There was a presentation on 18th century fashion in the movie industry as well, where some of us (including myself) took some notes. We left the exhibition and visited **Manneke Pis**, a Belgian landmark.

We didn't stay there very long because of the troop of tourists that were gathering around the small statue. And no one, bar Marjan, had the courage or desire to let someone take their picture with it anyway.

We walked around the touristic centre and **visited some of the shops** that had opened their doors on this lovely holiday, while the planes of the military parade zoomed over our heads, they were quite spectacular to see. Amongst the shops there was this small vintage clothing shop called *Burlesque*. The owner is a British man who came to open a shop here. He sells old English undergarments amongst others, like bloomers. Some of us went to have a look, because there was no way we could all fit into that tiny shop. He also has some really nice accessories and his prices are reasonable. If anyone is interested, this shop is located at the Zuidstraat/Rue Midi. On this street there are some nice comicbook shops as well and an Asian gadget shop.

Speaking of Asian, after this miniature shopping spree we went to the Asian supermarket to get something to drink and to nibble. They have a wide range of Chinese, Japanese and Thai sodas, that look and taste good. Sadly the time to say goodbye and return home-ward had come and in the station we all said goodbye and **until next time**.

The MIM: musical instruments museum
Art Nouveau beauty in Brussels



Mandatory visit to Manneke Pis,
one of Belgium's landmarks



Never too old to draw!
At the Museum of Costume and Lace



Standing, left to right: Claire, Lora and Agnes. Sitting, left to right: Valerie, Marjan and Hilde.

On 21st of July there was an anime convention in Hungary, MondoCon. Of course, being in Hungary I had to go! I looked up the website but unfortunately it was only in Hungarian! With some help of a translator, I could find all the information I needed and, to my surprise they were super thorough with all the information! They even made a youtube clip for those who have never been there to show the way. This clip was super useful and I could easily find my way just by following instructions.

The convention itself was a bit small. My first reaction was: "where are the other rooms? Is this it?" There were a few booksellers and several Lolitas selling jewellery and other small handmade stuff. I tried to chitchat with the Hungarian Lolitas but, I noticed that the language was a bit of an issue and so we couldn't really talk. The Hungarian girls all looked great! They took a lot of pride in their outfits. They really looked stunning.

With the help of the boyfriend of *Hajnalka Ligeti* we were able to have a nice conversation. Hajnalka is a seamstress and a starting Lolita. She was super sweet and helpful. She loves casual Lolita and wants to work as an indie-designer. She has a website and you can easily find her on facebook. I got some really cute hairpins from her. I think she is still looking for her own style but the things she made were already very original, detailed and the quality is really great.

There also was another indi brand present, *Hanakotoba*. This is a brand run by 2 Hungarian girls that make classical clothing and jewellery. They have really original things. The quality is also great and the prices are great! You can also easily find them on facebook or on livejournal!

"one of the best
conventions i
have attended!"

What this convention lacked on size it did make it up with the atmosphere. There were a lot of cosplayers. There was a big hall where a cosplayers competition was going on, there was super ambiance but it wasn't too loud! There was another small room where people could go and sing karaoke! You could enter a drawing contest and there was a whole space with tables and crafting materials so you could create a masterpiece.

Outside of the buildings, on the grass, under a tree, on a bench, there were people, heaps and heaps of people that had made great costumes! You could just look your eyes out! No-one was pushy, annoying, nothing. Everyone was really sweet and patient!

I personally feel that it was one of the best conventions I ever went to, just because the mood, the weather, the people were all in perfect balance. Everyone tried their best and no-one acted as if they were any better!

Event: Mondocon (J-culture convention)
Date: July 21
City: Budapest
Country: Hungary
Tickets & Info: www.mondocon.hu





AUGUST LOLITA FASHION MEET

visiting Mechelen for the Purikura machine
and a general good time.

saturday, August 4



Matthew and the guardian dragon



Geprijs Purikura machine is the best!



When a sign says "hug me"
hugging will happen!



Pink Blackbird
-- Website Coming Soon --
© 2012 Yukari Shinohara/S Davison

J-MUSIC CORNER

Japanese music reviews and interviews.

Reviews by Hilde Heyvaert, Marcus Rauchfuss, Bert Van den Wyngaert & Marjan Van Esbroeck of J-Rock Belgium.



1 6 8 - One Sixty Eight
"Setsugekka"
 Single
 Release date: 08.08.2012

1 6 8 - One Sixty Eight is the latest project by *Aoi*, and this is its first single to come out. It has four tracks, the title track *Setsugekka* and *SCANDAL*, and their instrumental versions. *Setsugekka* means something like "the beauty of four seasons", aptly-named since there are four tracks on the single. I don't know if this was intended to embody the actual seasons, but it could.



baroque
"Zazafuri Ame"
 Single
 Release Date: 20.06.2012



"Mellow Hollow"
 Single
 Release Date: 18.07.2012

Fast, with a touch of ska and not baroque at all. I was not quite sure what to expect from one of the most popular *Visual Kei* bands out there, having no previous experience regarding *Visual Key* myself, but I definitely did not expect this. With the name *Baroque* I had presumed it would be something with more classical influences. Instead I got a pleasant surprise with this highly danceable fast J-Rock track per single.



BULL ZEICHEN 88
"ALBUM"
 Album
 Release Date: 08.08.2012

BULL ZEICHEN 88's hard rock image continues with this new release, although they have softened it a bit. *ALBUM* contains more ballad-type songs, and perhaps the music has been mixed a bit more professionally this time, but all in all it's more of what we've gotten used to from the band.



Emilie Autumn
"Fight Like a Girl"
 CD
 Release date: 24.07.2012

Ok so yes I know, *Emilie Autumn* isn't a Japanese artist, but we did interview her for BCM 6 and she has a huge fandom amongst the Belgian Cupcakes, not to mention amongst Lolita affectionados worldwide full stop, so for her we are happy to make an exception.

Fight like a Girl takes the listener on a 17 song musical journey almost told like the soundtrack to a tale spun by Ms Autumn and I feel that some songs would actually benefit from visuals to enhance them. I'm pretty sure they'll be better live than on record. It's a well-balanced album, some songs better than others, with lyrics matching to the background setting of madness, asylums and carnivals, revenge and all other things associated with it. There's a good balance between anthems, melody and ballad, with Ms Autumn's voice remaining strong throughout, proving she isn't bound to a certain genre or style and neither will she allow herself to be. Once again Emilie Autumn sets herself apart by proving she is an artist with a story, and it's a tale that she tells masterfully, in a way that she makes it real and work rather than a badly executed concept which is so often the case nowadays. A definite recommendation for everyone who loves the weird and wacky, freak shows, asylums and mostly pleasantly disturbed, even for those previously unfamiliar with her works.



Esprit D'Air
"Shizuku"
 Single
 Release date: July 2012

This latest song by London based J-rock band *Esprit D'Air* is a nice mix of electronics, hard rock and speed metal, setting *Shizuku* apart from other songs out there. Singer YOSH' powerful and melodious vocals are more than just great and match the pace of the arrangements perfectly, making for a perfect unison between the heavy guitar riffs and creating a duality that only adds positively to the total sound of the band, making them stand out and rise above a lot of other groups in their particular style and genre.



Fake?
"2002-2012~Decade Selection~"
 CD
 Release date: 22.08.2012

For those unfamiliar with the band: *Fake?* was originally founded by Ken Lloyd (of *Atom on Sphere* and *Oblivion Dust*) and INORAN (known for both his self-titled solo project, *LUNA SEA* and *Muddy Apes*) back in 2001 (their first release dates from 2002, hence 2002 being the start year of this compilation's title). Back in October 2005, however, INORAN left the band and Ken Lloyd continued Fake? as his solo project. For this compilation album, which contains songs from both the ear with and post INORAN, a new song "Feel it" was written which for the first time in 7 years, features INORAN again. Compilation albums are not only a kind of nice "best of" for the fans, but also an excellent way to introduce people previously unfamiliar with the band to their music, and lo and behold it is good music indeed. A mix of Japanese and English (Ken Lloyd is perfectly bilingual so don't expect English on this record) with excellent guitar riffs and great compositions (as we come to expect from anything involving either Mr Lloyd or INORAN). The music by Fake? be it made before or after October 2005, is daring and innovative and just plain old J-rock as it should be.



Girugamesh
Zecchou BANG!!
 Single
 Release Date: 04.07.2012

When I read the name of the band, I thought: "Is this going to be J-Death Metal?" After all, a European or American band by the name of Gilgamesh could only be in that bracket. Well, no. Still, Zecchou BANG!! is the hardest and most aggressive piece I have reviewed for this issue. A mosh pit capable, driving track with all the features I love about J-Rock: Great mastery of the instruments, a distinct sound and unintelligible English in between the regular Japanese lyrics. Bonus: The lead singer does a little bit of metal growling, and there is a female background singer, doing some form of English in a highly kawaii voice.



INORAN
"Dive youth, Sonik dive"
 CD (digital release)
 European release: 03.09.2012

We've already reviewed this awesome CD in BCM 7 but this fine work's European release is also worth mentioning. Sadly for the moment only a digital release via the *Bishi-Bishi/Ankama* online shop, *iTunes*, *Amazon* etc is available, so for a hard copy you'll still have to use sites such as *Amazon Japan*, *Japan Discoveries* or *CD Japan*, but it's a start!



Kalafina
"Moonfesta"
 Single
 Release date: 18.07.2012

The latest four song single is another fine masterpiece from *Kalafina*, where their beautiful and often ethereal voices are perfectly matched to the classical music. Ethnic and rococo influences are not only clear but a perfect addition to the already brilliant songs. Whilst all three vocalists have distinctively different voices, they are still perfectly in tune with each other and the arrangements, accompanying each other masterfully. If you like folk or classical music, chances are you'll love this.



Kiyoharu
"Namida ga Afureru / sari"
 Single
 Release Date: 02.08.2012

The latest 3 song release from *Kiyoharu* comes only months after his other one *ryusei* and fails to reach the same level. Whether this means that Kiyoharu needs *INORAN* to achieve greatness or that this is just not as good as its predecessor is something left to be considered. Fact of the matter is that it seems like he's playing it safe with this single, sure the songs are typical of Kiyoharu and in his particular style, but that's about all there is to be said about this.



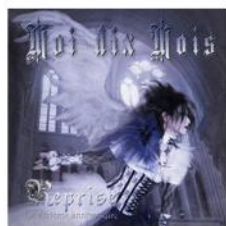
THE MICRO HEAD4N'S
"A BEGINNING FROM THE END"
 CD
 Release date: 1.8.2012

The first album of all-star band *THE MICRO HEAD4N'S* has been pretty hyped about, as is generally the case with releases from bands composed from several members of other well-known bands. There's a bit of a "you simply have to like this" feel surrounding it. Sadly they don't quite live up to the expectation, it's indisputably a good album, but it's not a great one. Regardless of my opinion I'm sure that many fans of the band and the band's individual members will truly enjoy this but I found it rather run of the mill. Whilst the band's sound is pretty rocking and their skill on their particular instrument is great, for me personally it's missing that sense of originality, that small thing setting them apart from other bands out there. The hard hitting feeling of a good J-rock record is there, but none of the innovation that makes them truly fantastic or exceptional. I'm hoping that they'll continue to grow and go from good to epic with their next release.



MIYAVI
"DAY 1"
 Single
 Release date: 11.07.2012

Guitar wizard MIYAVI not only once again establishes that his skill with his instrument is nigh unmatched in today's music industry and that he's found a playing style that is clearly uniquely his own, but also that he is an amazing composer. This six track release has three live songs from various concerts as well as the title track and an instrumental version thereof. Even without MIYAVI's distinctive vocals that song is still left standing easily. This particular J-rock is unique, full of riffs and arrangements that will make you get up and move to the groove, with the vocals and lyrics adding to the total package making this epic.



Moi dix Mois
"Reprise"
 CD
 Release date: 11.07.2012

The new album consists mostly of remakes of older songs, and the first thing that catches the ear is the mood. It sounds a notch sadder than the original songs, as if Mana and co decided there wasn't enough sadness in the world already. For some songs it's merely a question of remixed instruments, for others a full re-recording has taken place. In re-recording, the organ has taken on an even more important role than it always has had. One can easily imagine Mana entering a church where these delicate melodies are being played, only to throw his bombastic bass line on top of them. The whole album as well as the songs themselves tell a story through sound, not lyrics. The story ends with a new song, entitled *Je l'aime*, French for "I love him/her." I'm tempted to say "him", I don't know why. Perhaps Jesus was meant, considering the overall churchy sound of *Moi dix Mois*. All in all I think it's a very good album, keeping a good balance between the "old" style and the "new" style for the remastered songs. And of course, the new song doesn't let the fans down either.



MOMOIRO CLOVER Z
"BATTLE AND ROMANCE"
 CD
 European release

This five member J-pop group is sure to make fans of the genre more than a little pleased with the European release of their 2011 album *BATTLE AND ROMANCE* (thank you Bishi-Bishi). The music is best described as fast paced J-pop laced with electro beats, making for a perfect combination between the typical Japanese pop songs and video game theme tunes we've all come to love since our childhood, mixed with some anime type sounds, pumping drums and superb guitar riffs. The five different voices make for a vocally complete sound that sets them apart from other J-pop groups and the slightly harder instrumental accompaniment,

often bordering on pop-rock, makes this group fun, funky and timeless. I'm not normally a fan of (Japanese) pop music but I do really like this band. Their sound is fun and quirky yet original enough to keep you listening and wanting to move about to the tunes. Fun fact: next year *Momoiro Clover Z* will be singing the theme song to the new *Sailor Moon* anime.



Rose Noire
**"Neo-Renaissance
 1st Movement"**
 EP
 Release date: 25.07.2012

Without a shadow of a single doubt, this is *Rose Noire's* best work to date. It's got all the classic elements that makes this band so great, such as the juxtaposing of the classical violin and contemporary electro elements, only improved upon. The added rococo influences on songs such as *Royal Garden*, *Lascia ch'io pianga* and the self-explanatorily called *Rococo* now vocalise the historical undertones I always previously envisioned whilst listening to their music. The EP is innovative, but in such a way that it can entice both old and new fans to the masterpiece *Rose Noire* has produced with this 7 song wonder.



YUI HORIE
"HIMITSU"



"HONEY JET"
 CD
 European release

Fans of *YUI HORIE* and J-pop lovers all over Europe rejoice, thanks to the label *Bishi-Bishi*, her albums *HIMITSU* and *HONEY JET* are now available in Europe! Both records are filled to the brim with fun and upbeat J-pop to make you instantly cheerful. The songs are dose with just enough electro beats to keep the tempo flowing and chipper. And the occasional jazzy influence goes on adding to the total cheer. It's great music to listen to if you're into J-pop and also makes for fabulous non-obtrusive background music to match nearly every occasion that isn't composed of gloom (I'd say it's perfect to chase away the gloom really). It has that typical anime music flair to it that you often encounter in the Japanese pop scene, but sets itself slightly apart thanks to the arrangements and use of style influences and instruments, making it different enough to stand out within the genre.

INORAN has long since proven that he is much, much more than LUNA SEA's rhythm guitarist. Musician, designer, photographer and philanthropist are just a few things that the successful solo artist can be accredited to.

BCM spoke to him in shortly before the start of his European tour

SEVEN SAMURAI.



You're a designer and model as well as a musician. What inspires you when you design?

Inspiration is like a gift to me from the various experiences in my life.

Are you inspired by different things when you design then when you make music?

The only difference is in the field of creation, but I guess it's the same.

Is there a currently popular Japanese fashion style you could see yourself wear or that you would like to try out?

I often wear clothes designed by my friends because in that way I will be wearing clothes knowing how they were created.

Are you planning on doing more with your photography, just like you have with your interest in fashion?

I'd like to capture anything which inspires some emotions in me.

What's your all-time favourite camera?
The FUJIFILM FinePix X100.

You've been in Europe before with LUNA SEA and now you're going as a solo artists, do think you'll experience Europe differently this time around?

I previously performed in Europe with LUNA SEA for our Reboot Tour, which was driven and attended by fans from all over the world. The memories of them singing along to our songs and enjoying every bit of the concert are all moments still very clear in my heart and mind even now. I'd like to surpass that feeling by enjoying a fantastic time together with all the fans on this tour.

What's your favourite thing about Europe so far?

I've visited parts of Europe such as Austria, France, Italy and the UK numerous times for work and travel. Every place has their wonderful points. Please let me know if you have any recommended places to go.

What places you've not been to yet do you hope to visit in the future?

I'd like to go to all of them.

People generally focus on you with your solo project but don't know much about your band, especially here in Europe. Could you say something positive about each member?

On guitar, we have YUKIO MURATA, who is a vocalist and guitarist of the band MY WAY MY LOVE. He plays like the ONLY ONE. It's very noisy and aggressive.

Next, we have u:zo on bass. A former member of the band YELLOW FRIED CHICKENz led by GACKT, he is one of Japan's best players capable of creating the best grooves.

On drums, we have Ryo Yamagata. As he is mainly active overseas, he is both a powerful and technical player. He is also a drummer with a gentle disposition!

Do you have an ultimate dream guitar you would like to own one day?

A lot of guitars that I have yet to get know exist out there. There are also guitars that I've played in real life and fell in love with. I'd like to meet more of these guitars in the future.

These days more and more things are computer programmed to the point where you now have fully computerized instruments (such as the Kitara guitar by Misa Digital) that run on an operating system and don't even use strings anymore. How do you feel about advancements in guitar technology like that, being a guitarist yourself?

I feel that it's a really great thing that technology has advanced. Unlike in the past, now everyone has access to an environment where they can create music. However, the most important part of it is what we are going to create using this technology. I put my soul in for every note played on my guitar. Because I felt that with that thought it will become the power of the song.

What are your plans for say the following 2 or 3 years?

I'd like to create a new album and go on a European tour again.

You're playing at the Manga and Sci-fi Show in Paris. Do you have a thing for a certain superhero or specific geek universe?

Being Japanese I felt greatly honoured that Japanese culture can be so well received in Europe.

In Belgium we get sporadic news about the aftermath of the 2011 disaster in Japan, and mainly focussed on Tepco, but it's sadly all very objective. Could you please tell us a little more about how the situation currently is in Japan?

The disaster was a really saddening event. However, the people affected by the quake and tsunami are gradually regaining their lives, but depending on the location there are still places which have remained untouched since then. There are also some discrepancy issues on the transparency of the problems arising due to radiation and we're also in a situation where we can't clearly determine

what is right and what is wrong. However, during the time of the incident people from around the world have reached out their hands to us. This is something that I will never forget. I think that how we proceed from now on, be it as Japanese or as part of the World, will be put to the test.

I'm doing all that I possibly can now so that everyone affected can recover from it, even if it's only one day sooner.

Do you have a message for your fans in Belgium?

I'm looking forward to meeting all of you guys soon. I hope that you can come and experience a live for yourself. We'll be waiting at the venue!

Stay tuned for part 2 in our next edition!

INORAN "Seven Samurais" European tour

August 31: KGB, Stockholm, Sweden

September 2: Area, Vienna, Austria

September 5: MTC Club, Cologne, Germany

September 8: Headcrash, Hamburg, Germany

September 11: Wig Wam, Venice, Italy

September 13: Black Circus, Milan, Italy

September 16: Paris Manga & Sci-fi Show, Paris, France

Official website: <http://inoran.org>



Interview by Hilde Heyvaert and Meeve. Japanese translation by Esther Huang and Kyde. Photography courtesy of Backstage Project and King Records. Special thanks to INORAN and Paul Chu.

J-ROCK IN LONDON

Excellent Japanese rock music doesn't necessary have to originate in Japan, as British J-rock band

ESPRIT D'AIR proves effortlessly.

We send them some questions to find out more about this exciting band and they were kind enough to make some time for us, thanks guys!

Let's get to know Esprit D'Air a bit better. How about, by a means of introductions, you guys say something positive about each member of the band?

Erisu: Yosh likes sushi and lots of it which is good because I like lots of sushi too! Kaito is an absolute monster on guitar! I'm so grateful to be working with him. He keeps us all organised and makes a great leader for the band. Daishi is probably one of the most creative-minded people I have ever met! As well as his beats, the artwork he produces for us is very inspirational.

Yosh: Of course, all the members have different characters, so that is inspiring to each other and it makes it an interesting band.

Kaito: Yes, the band is like a family to me. It's always a pleasure working with them all.

You're based in London rather than somewhere in Japan. What are the advantages and disadvantages of your geography that you experience as a J-rock band?

Erisu: London pretty much feels like the middle of the world for us. It's easy for us to fly anywhere to really and Europe being a big musical continent can really open us up to lots of great opportunities we've already experienced in different parts of Spain!

Yosh: People usually listen to the style of their own country, so it wouldn't be easy to accept our style of music but there are core fans around which are not affected by another style, so we can be happy to carry on our music.

Kaito: We were really surprised to find that we have a following all over the world besides Europe, particularly in Central and South America also. As you know, our music has managed to reach Belgium too. It shows that Japanese music can be enjoyed outside of Japan, regardless of its language. I see this more of an advantage than anything.

Looks are important in J-rock, and in London you're in the heart of one of Europe's fashion capitals, how important is fashion to Esprit D'Air?

Do you pay attention to Japanese fashions as well as European ones?

Erisu: The fashion side is important but the music is number one. We just like to wear whatever is comfortable to us really. In an odd occasion we sometimes would like to step out of our comfort zone and wear something that looks edgy!

Yosh: Having a chance to fly back to Japan, I can easily compare both fashions. For me, clothes are a part of our identity to express ourselves even if you are not in the band.

Kaito: I have some interest in fashion, but I very rarely pay much attention to the current trends. I still dress as if it was the 1980s, even though I wasn't born then. I also like to see it as a way to express myself.

Name the top three Westerner artists and top three Japanese artists (working in any style or form of art) that have prominently influenced you and why.

Kaito: Firstly, from Western music, it would be Joe Satriani. I love his melodies and technical excellence on guitar. Secondly, Van Halen. Eddie's note phrasing is really interesting, and his two-handed tapping inspired me to write some of Esprit D'Air's guitar solos. And finally, Black Sabbath. I remember when I first started playing guitar, I jammed to the Paranoid album a lot, so their music was important in

building the foundations of my playing.

I probably don't listen to as much Japanese music as I should, but ONE OK ROCK and L'Arc~en~Ciel are two bands I listen to. Stepping away from rock music, Mogwai and Explosions in the Sky are also on my list of inspirations.

Daishi: Each member has their own influences which we all bring together as the writing process is often a very collaborative process between us. I am quite easily inspired by artists like MONO (Japan) & Ólafur Arnalds (Iceland) because they pour so much emotion in to their compositions, it may not be a direct influence to the sound of Esprit D'Air but it's very important to me to write music that evokes various powerful emotions and I hope our listeners feel that too.

Your latest single Shizuku will soon be playable on Rock Band 3 for Xbox 360 as the very first Japanese-language song to appear on the game, congratulations!

Are you guys very into video games? If so, which is your favourite game? And are video games a big influence on you when you create music?

Kaito: Thank you! I am actually really bad at games like Rock Band and Guitar Hero, so I think it would be funny to see me failing to play our own song on it. I really like the old arcade games... Street Fighter, Final Fight and Tekken to name a few. Japanese video games definitely have some influence in my compositions. I think those video games have



Although the process varies from piece to piece, I am very fond of composition and storytelling and enjoy focusing on those two elements. Also when appropriate I like to leave space for the viewer's imagination, for example I deliberately showed the figure's back in "The Hunter" artwork so that no-

influenced many artists in the Western music scene too, as I am sure there are some that may have inspirations from composers such as *Nobuo Uematsu* and *Akira Yamaoka*. Funnily, when "*Shizuku*" was written all the instruments were notated in MIDI. Daishi thought it sounded like music in a "final boss" sequence for an old 8-bit RPG. Not my intention, but maybe everything sounds like an 8-bit game when it is played in MIDI... Haha.

Yosh: I am not really into gaming, but I am still appreciating the music which are featured in them. The game music/theme makes the game story more dynamic and dramatic.

Daishi: I don't consider myself a gamer anymore! (More so when I was a child) but the games I played throughout my childhood - *Final Fantasy* and *Secret of Mana* have incredible soundtracks, and because I grew up listening to them I think they will always be an influence on me, not only musically but in life generally. In recent years the two best games I've played are *Shadow of the Colossus* and *Journey*!

Reiss: I'm a big fan of the *Call of Duty* and *Resident Evil* series, I like my blood and gore in games which reflects upon my favourite movie genre being horror and sci-fi movies. I take anything in this world as an influence, so I would say video games are one of them.

A question for Daishi who also designs the incredible cover art for your musical releases: your work has a great balance of unique style and technical skill. Can you touch on your tools and process for your work, and how you find that balance?

Daishi: Thank you for your kind words! The tools I mostly use are Photoshop and a Wacom graphics tablet and sometimes some 3D software to create a basic blackout. I like to keep an open approach to the creative process - sometimes I have a vivid image in mind before I begin. Other times, I jump straight in with no particular image in mind and begin creating a chaotic mess using various digital mark-making processes, until I begin to see something and develop it from there.

body knows what her face looks like and they are free to imagine.

I haven't spent much energy on intentionally trying to develop a unique style, so I think it has happened naturally over the years... and I think the 'speedpainting' movement has had quite a strong influence on me, I find that in some contexts looser brush strokes can trigger a stronger emotional response than something which is super precise and clean. My technical ability has stemmed from studying art at university. It's only during this period that I have taken my art more seriously and developed what I'm capable of now, but of course learning and making improvements are infinite actions, which I think is an important attitude to embrace in all creative avenues.

There are many, many parallels between creating music and visual art, both inspire each other. Having the opportunity to do both in Esprit D'Air is very fulfilling. I'm sorry if my answer is long-winded! I could talk about art, music & creative processes all day!



What's your favourite instrument or piece of equipment that you currently own?

Erisu: My bass - without it I will be playing on rubber bands!

Kaito: Like most electric guitar players, my favourite would be my guitar pedals. I love collecting them and combining various tones and effects to make my very own sound out of them.

Yosh: My computer. That has everything for my songwriting and so on.

Daishi: Tin pots & pans - on a serious note I actually practise drums on my pillows!

You've performed in both the UK and Spain so far, what's your ultimate dream venue that you'd love to hold a live in?

Kaito: A dream live venue? Not sure. We would like to turn any venue we play into an amazing time for both us and our fans.

Daishi: My dream venue would be to perform on the back of a giant turtle while surfing on waves across the ocean, surrounded by hot babes & giant mech robots. There'd be fireworks and admission would be free providing you can keep up with the turtle! Hahaha... Honestly, a good sound system, and being able to see the audience is good enough for me, playing shows abroad is a huge bonus because I love adventuring to new places. But to dream big I imagine Fuji Rock Festival would be special... who knows maybe one day!

Yosh: It would be great to perform at music festivals such as Summer Sonic, Fuji Rock Festival in Japan sometime in the future.

Erisu: I have to be honest to say any live show I play is like a dream venue to me. Just playing a live show sharing our music with people is the best dream venue.

Which 5 things do you really want to accomplish with the band?

Daishi: 1) Continue to create music which has a lot of emotional value to all of us, 2) to perform our music globally and use it to build bridges to new places, and extend the Esprit D’Air family (our fans), 3) repeat 1 & 2.

Kaito: I would like to see how much we can achieve by working on our music independently. Self-producing is wonderful, because you can be a part of everything from the songwriting, recording, and producing. Like Daishi said, it is important for us to continue creating music that means a lot to us. Working on music entirely on our own keeps it close to our hearts. I feel accomplished as long as we continue doing this, and if our audience can feel the energy and emotions we put into our compositions, then we know that it is working.

Any messages for the Belgian (J-rock) fans?

Erisu: We hope you will like our future releases. Like & follow us on Facebook and Twitter, we don't bite!

Daishi: I look forward to meeting the people who read this in the future! Thank you!

Yosh: Practice our song "Shizuku" on Rock Band 3 and rock together when we meet at our next show!

Kaito: Thank you for reading about us. If you have any more questions, you can tweet to us on Twitter @espritdair. We can be sure to answer some, and we look forward to reading them!

Esprit D'Air is:

Kaito: guitar
Erisu: bass
Daishi: drums
Yosh: vocals

Official website: <http://www.espritedair.com/>

INTERVIEW

Everyone loves music, and when a Japanese artist tours or has their CD released outside of Japan there's always cause of celebration amongst fans.

XAVIER NORINDR of Bishi-Bishi records is a driving force within the corner of the European music industry focussing on acquainting people with awesome Asian music, giving us the opportunity to learn more about things happening behind the scenes.

You work for Bishi-Bishi, could you tell us a little more about the label and your position as content manager?

Bishi-Bishi is part of the Ankama Group, which is a global French entertainment group. Ankama has activities in the field of video games, animation, comics, French manga and now also music. Bishi-Bishi has been created to aid in the development of Asian artists, primarily the Japanese. The idea behind the label is to represent different Asian artists in Europe, but with a different approach than certain other labels maintain. Which is the reason I am content manager. I focus on the entire content of working with an artist: not just promotion but also taking them on tour within Europe, distribute their music but also merchandise such as, for example: t-shirts and posters.

It's important to note that Bishi-Bishi isn't about a one certain style of music, with us it's all about the artists and we want to promote Asian music regardless of genre and to work with as many styles as possible. I work not only with Japanese but also Korean and Chinese artists.

Your offices are in Roubaix (France), why there?

The head office of Ankama is situated here, therefore we are also housed in the Ankama building. Ankama does also have offices in Paris and Tokyo. Because of my particular position within the company I meet a lot of people, so it's best to be in the head office. I also travel to Japan on business at least once a year though.

How did you become active in the music business? Is it something you've always wanted to do? Did you study anything specific for this job?

When I was a teenager I was really into video games and especially anime. I was a big fan of *Dragon Ball Z*. I grew up on all the anime of *Club Dorothée* (redaction: a French show popular in the 1980ties well known for it's Japanese shows and anime such as *Bioman*, *Dragon Ball*, *Dragon Ball Z* and *Saint Seiya*, among others). When the *Sega Mastersystem* came out I immediately bought it together with my brothers, we did the same with the *Super Nintendo*. When the very first *Dragon Ball* game was released we snatched it up, in the Japanese version no less. We were all very into Japanese culture as well as the video game culture.

When I was in high school my brother and I started playing music, doing covers of *Nirvana* and *Metallica*. We had figured out that playing videogames and watching anime all the time didn't make us very popular with the girls, so we figured we'd become musicians *laughs*. So we found a way to become more popular, which worked out very well *smiles*.

After that I studied business school in Paris, there I became interested in courses that had to do with working in the music industry and the world of video games. The first internships I did were with *Warner Chapelle*. For a little over a year I worked for *Roadrunner Records*. That really made me want to work in music.

When I still played together with my brother we started to cover Japanese bands also such as *LUNA SEA*, *X Japan*, *Dir en Grey*. At *Roadrunner* I organised Metal showcases in French bars and we thought it would be fun to do the same but with Japanese music instead, and that worked out really quite well. After I graduated I started working for a marketing agency but I very quickly, in 2005, decided to start working in the music industry in a real structure to promote Japanese artists. So I've been working with Japanese musicians in a proper job since then.

Which instruments do you play?

I played in several bands, I played the guitar and in another one the drums. It has been a long time since I performed with a band, the last time I played a live concert was in 2007 I think. I still play guitar on my own of course whenever I have time, drums not so much because I sadly lack the room to properly set up a drum kit. I still love playing the guitar though.



You work with Asian bands, what attracts you the most in music from Asia?

First of all the fact that in Asia you can find artists that are definitely just as good as Western artists. Especially in France there's a lot of misconceptions and stereotyping about Japanese artists; for example that they aren't really skilled. That couldn't be further from the truth because they're very good at what they do. What also attracted me a lot was the vocals. Their approach to vocals is rather different and the voice often adds a whole new dimension to both the melody and the music. Of course music sounds differently depending on the language it's sung in but Japanese music is of a very high level musically and I find that it has its own very distinctive identity. I also think that it shouldn't be reserved just for Japan but that it should be heard throughout the world. Their particular music, be it *visual-kei* or *J-pop*, exists nowhere else than in Japan, which is why it interested me and I wanted to export it so to speak. Nowadays *K-pop* is very popular, and that already resembles American music a lot more. But *J-music* as well as *K-pop* are lifting the entire scene and getting it more attention, making Asian music more mainstream and getting Asian artists to adjust their working methods and collaborating with foreign artists.

More and more people working in the industry, such as people organising festivals, are starting to notice that Asia has a lot of very talented, high quality artists and bands out there.

What is also very important to keep in mind is that the Asians are far more ambitious and have a stronger work ethic than Westerner bands. They're a lot more rigorous, their approach to getting the job done is different than what you see in for example France and the States.

Do you think that with the rising popularity of K-pop the Japanese see them as a kind of competition and feel like they should put themselves out there as well?

Absolutely, that's definitely the case. We speak about the "*K-pop explosion*" now, and it is true that the Japanese feel a bit marked by that rise and react to that as a matter of honour.

I think it'll move in a circle, first we had the Japanese *visual-kei* and *J-pop*, now it's all about *K-pop* internationally, after this we will see artists from other Asian countries such as China, Taiwan, possibly even Thailand and after that all the attention will turn back to Japan.

I firmly believe that the next big international artists to take over from the greats like *Madonna* and *The Red Hot Chili Peppers* will be Asian. They work a lot faster than us, it takes about 5 years to properly develop an artist in Europe, they do that in 1 year. It's all about entertainment for them and the "product", which makes their industry move so fast. It's also partly the reason

I'm content manager, and I focus a lot on the commercial aspects. There are so many bands out there and of course a label has to be viable.

I can imagine that it's not always easy to work with bands from a totally different continent than ours, what are the specific difficulties you face the most?

There are a lot of difficulties, but strangely enough the language barrier isn't the main one. I don't speak a lot of Japanese and I can get by.

The main problems are cultural differences and habits of life and society. You have to keep in mind that a lot of Japanese people have never left their country, and even if they do they go on very defined tourist tours and they don't see anything outside of those.

As far as work is concerned it's things like office hours. For instance we quit when our day is over. They don't understand things like that. For them, you stop working when the project you're working on is done. They'll go out for meals of course, but then they come

“
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back and finish what they were working on.

When you're working with the Japanese, you have to be very conscious that they are rather like workaholics. But more in a positive sense. Of course there are a lot of negative sides to this kind of attitude too as they have a hard time of letting go of their way of doing things, even when we do things entirely different in Europe.

What do you look for in a band to sign to Bishi-Bishi?

There's several parameters. It has to be a band that is already developed in their own sound and style. You see that a lot more with young Japanese bands than Western bands. You even have bands that have released merchandise before they release their first albums, like the *THE MICRO HEAD 4N'S*. They also need to have a commercial potential and preferably also a strong fan base. It's the fan base that will attract. In France, and

I think in other countries too, the media love the fans. They love doing focus on them. They always do them about fans, but never about the bands. They want to see the madness of the fans. *Visual-kei* was excellent for that because it has a look that was very attractive to the media. It's with that buzz you promote the artists in the same go. And of course I listen to bands before I sign them, but groups like *THE MICRO HEAD 4N'S* did have that advantage of course.



THE MICRO HEAD 4N'S recently released their debut album "A BEGINNING FROM THE END" in Europe via Bishi-Bishi.

Being part of the music industry is very hard work with often long hours. What does a typical work day look like for you?

You do have to know that I don't have standard work days, I don't work the traditional hours of 9 to 5. I spend a lot of my days on email, as it's very important with Asian people to go over the contracts until literally every i is dotted. So I spend a lot of time confirming, re-confirming and double checking and confirming yet another time as well as adjusting the documents and obligations.

And of course I spend a lot of time on promotion, marketing and social media.

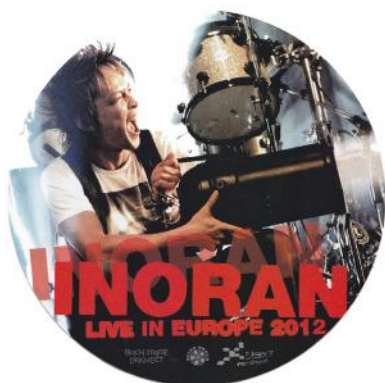
That's all very important. When you run a label things are very complicated because you have to do everything it starts from the idea which is going into development. You need the legal frame, sort out the finances, see who earns what and what the expenses are. Then you have to present your idea and eventually release and sell it. I do all of that myself and it's because of that I don't have traditional days and spend a lot of time sorting everything out. But I'll be really honest about this: a lot of fans think that people in the industry earn a lot of money and are rich. This isn't the case at all. You need a great big budget just to get started because you need to cover so many expenses. Not just in getting products made, but also to cover royalties which are paid in advance, getting the artists to come to Europe several times to tour to gain popularity etc. It takes years before you start making money whilst it costs a lot to get started. And even the artists that I work with, even the members of *Trill-Dan*, still have jobs aside from being musicians.



TRILL-DAN's album HANGYAKU SEMEI which was recorded in France & is distributed in Europe via Bishi-Bishi



LUNA SEA's rhythm guitarist INORAN, live in Paris, France, as part of his European solo tour *Seven Samurai*. Performing at the *Paris Manga & Sci-Fi Show* via Bishi-Bishi. Want to see him there? Tickets and info via the convention's website: www.parismanga.fr His latest album *Sonic youth, Sonic dive* will also be digitally released in Europe via Bishi-Bishi from September 4 onward.



Japanese idol Shiori Kawana, known for her diversity, is performing her usual brand of cheerful and uplifting music at the *Art to Play festival* in Nantes, France on November 24 & 25. Tickets & Info: <http://www.art-to-play.fr>



What's the best and the worst about your job?

I get to go to Japan *laughs*! No I'm kidding! The greatest thing is that I never have the impression that it's work. I'm always in an environment that I love. I work with the Japanese, I'm always in contact with the worlds of anime, video games, manga and music, I get to go to a lot of concerts and talk about music all the time. I also love the complexity of cultural differences, it's great to get people to work together.

The worst is that you don't get to have a private life. It's to say: your personal and professional lives start to mix. I realised that a lot of my friends are also people I work with. It's not all bad of course, but a lot of people don't understand that as they have friends outside of work and colleagues they work with, that's not the case for me.

What's the best memory you have from working at Bishi-Bishi?

That would be Trill-Dan. In 2009 I wasn't with Bishi-Bishi yet, but they came to Europe. I said that I would like them to come back to Europe and record an album with them over here. And that's exactly what I managed to do (red: for their album "HANGYAKU SEMEI", you can read a review of that and an interview with this great band in BCM #7) and that's great because I love the band a lot. Even though it was difficult it was all worth it to work with a Japanese artist in recording.

If you got to choose 3 artists to sign to Bishi-Bishi, who would you pick?

Dir en Grey and *Maximum the Hormones* as Japanese artists and then *2N1* from Korea.

What would you advise to people wanting to become active in the music industry?

Work internationally as much as possible and with artists of different countries.

Where do you hope to be with Bishi-Bishi in a couple of years?

To be completely active on the market for Asian artists. By that I mean to repeat the experience with Trill-Dan: to get Asian artists to record here in Europe and distribute them more and more. At the moment we have licensing agreements but it would be good to have artists record with us from the start. I still want it to be a label with only Asian artists. In any case the music industry is becoming far more international.

You're often present at conventions, which cons can we look forward to seeing Bishi-Bishi at in the coming months?

I'm still in the process of sorting out details for several events in 2013 so I rather not give definitive information until I have it, but I can definitely say that Bishi-Bishi will be at the *Paris Manga & Sci-Fi Show* with *INORAN* of *LUNA SEA* where he will perform a showcase. The convention takes place on the 15th and 16th of September.

Bishi-Bishi website:
www.bishi-bishi.com





■ レーベルイベントスケジュール

8月1日 池袋CYBER

Tokami ワンマン
shadows gate =月蝕の鎮魂歌=

8月5日 池袋RUIDO K-3

Synkyet-シンクイエットレコ発初主催
「Crimson Party Vol.1」

8月8日 池袋CYBER

[The blink of a nebula 番外編]
セッションイベント

8月9日 池袋CYBER

[The blink of a nebula Vol.6]
Capella 創バースデースペシャル

8月19日 池袋CYBER

SUICIDE ALI 2ndアルバム発売記念ワンマン
「Emerge of Tainted Gallery」

8月23日 池袋CYBER

ミサルカ バースデー3ヶ月連続 主催イベント第2弾
azamiバースデー企画

8月26日 リトルハーツ新宿

Starwave Records合同インストアイベント

Starwave Records

www.starwaverecords.jp



9月15日 池袋CYBER

SUICIDE ALI主催イベント
「Spread Atlas vol.9」

9月24日 池袋CYBER

ミサルカ バースデー3ヶ月連続主催イベント第3弾
vetchieバースデー企画

9月28日 西九条Bland New

Magistina Saga新音源先行発売初主催イベント
「RElation Name -SPELL-」

10月6日 池袋CYBER

10月10日 池袋CYBER

Tokami主催イベント
「The first anniversary」

10月31日 池袋CYBER

THE SOUND BEE HD主催イベント

11月10日 池袋CYBER

Rose Noire初主催イベント

11月17日 池袋CYBER

[The blink of a nebula Vol.7]

11月27日 池袋CYBER

[The blink of a nebula Vol.8]

12月4日 高田馬場AREA

12月7日 池袋CYBER

Calmando Qual主催イベント

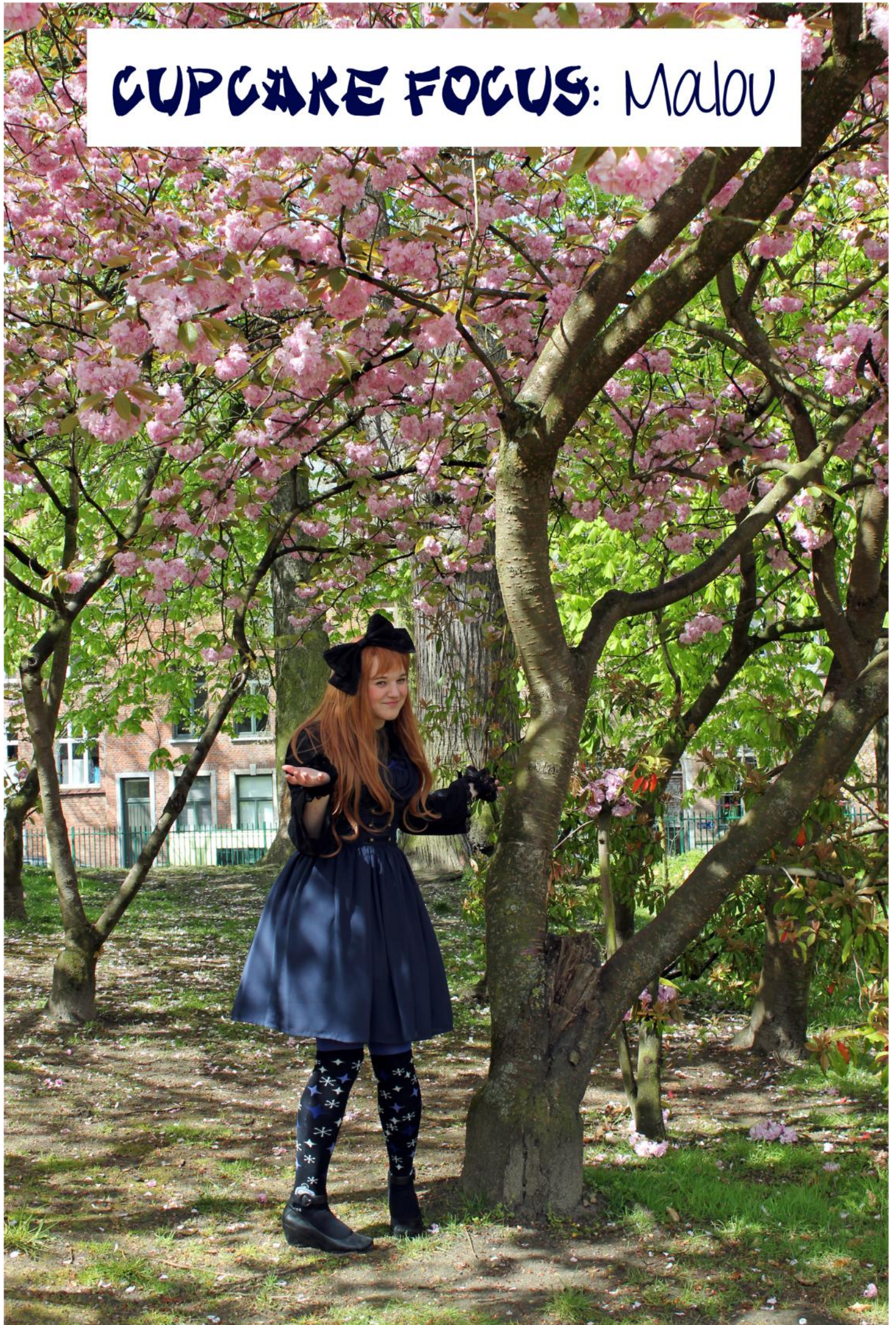
12月12日 池袋CYBER

[The blink of a nebula Vol.9]

12月19日 池袋CYBER

[The blink of a nebula Vol.10]

CUPCAKE FOCUS: Malou



fashion student, fandom geek, fashionista

malou

Meet Malou, the Belgian Cupcake with her own style, mixing her own fun and fabulous designs with brand pieces.

You're a fashion design student yourself, do you hope to one day own your own Lolita brand?

I do, but of course to design a print is a bit hard. I'm studying to make prints but I'm not that good at drawing sweets and cute stuff (yet) but practice makes perfect. That's what I have been told since I was a small child. For now I just use cute prints that I find in fabric shops or prints I like online.

Is Japanese culture and fashion an influence on you when you design your own garments?

Well of course because the fashion I love itself comes from Japan. Lots of the Japanese street fashions make awesome coords and I love seeing other people being creative with it. But these days designers all over the world sometimes come up with some cute prints or some nice garments. So yes they influence me but they are only a part of the influence, sometimes the stupidest things inspires me.

You're into several geek fandoms such as My Little Pony and Doctor Who, what would your ultimate Lolita fandom outfit look like?

It would look like this: I'm better at drawing then explaining.



Do you have an ultimate dream item?

Angelic Pretty's "Chess Chocolate" was my dream dress. When one of my best friends stopped wearing Lolita (which was sad) she gave me hers (the jabot JSK in ivory). At the moment I don't have an extreme want towards other dresses but I have a big weakness for cherry prints.

Which Lolita style would you still like to try some day?

To be honest, I love all styles but I don't think a lot of styles would look great on me. If I have to choose one I would like to try prince style *laughs* because it's the only style in Lolita you can wear only pants and get away with it.

in a nutshell

Name: Malou Rottiers

Forum nick: soyo

Age: 19

Styles: Classic and Gothic

Favourite brands: Innocent World and Alice and the Pirates

Wearing Lolita fashion since: 2010

Interview & photography by Hilde Heyvaert.

INTERVIEW

FLY AWAY FASHION is a small Dutch indi brand specialising not only in lovely Lolita garments and accessories but in tailored pieces, making their work accessible for everyone with a love for the fashion.

They have just released a new line "LETTERS FROM PARIS" and had a stand at Japan Expo, Europe's largest J-culture convention.

And aside from all of that they're also known for their fabulous TEA PARTIES. So naturally they have some STORIES TO SHARE.

**Could you give us a quick introduction of Fly Away Fashion?
What's your mission statement so to speak?**

Fly Away Fashion was founded in June of 2009 on a rainy afternoon. Whilst making our first own Lolita accessories, so began growing the idea to sharing these creations with others, in exchange for money to keep the business going! And here we are now in 2012, with our international webshop and physical shop in the heart of the Netherlands.

Our mission is as follows: with Fly Away Fashion we want to let our dreams of elegance and cuteness live through in our handmade products, that are all made with love and dedication.

We want to make it accessible to every girl to feel like a princess.

What inspired you to start your own Lolita brand?

It were mostly the Lolita brands from Japan we came in touch with while we were starting with Lolita, most items were quite out of our price range, so we decided to try and make our own. We got a lot of good reactions to it, and on our first convention we were sold out! This was a sign for us to try and make it as big as possible.

Did you study fashion in school? Or are you self-taught?

We never did a study at a fashion school, and are currently on our way to our graduation year of applied science and animal husbandry, quite the opposite.

Katie: My mother has been sewing almost her whole life, mostly doll clothes, but she taught us all the basics and had some pretty lace in stock for us to begin with. My mom is always very supportive and helped us a lot especially at the start.



You've recently had a stand at Japan Expo Paris, which is seen as THE J-culture convention of Europe. How was that experience for you personally?

Eline: It was so much fun. We met so much nice people.

Katie: It was really beyond belief, looking back at it, it was quite tough to run the booth for 4 days, yet it felt like it took no energy at all. We've got so much back from the weekend, all the nice people we met, pretty Lolita's we saw, all the things to look at there. Really amazing.

Was it something you would say is essential for an indi brand to do at some point if they are working with Japanese fashion?

For us it was quite a big step, our first abroad experience, and we all settled it not so long before the convention. We just got the idea, and made the leap! We think it is very important for indi brands to be out there, people want to feel and touch the products you make, and are mostly very interested in the designers behind it. And you meet so many new people, and are out there to present the things you put all the energy and passion in.

How would you compare Japan Expo with conventions in your home country of the Netherlands?

Compared to the conventions we have in the Netherlands, Japan Expo was huge! The visitor numbers were hundred times that of conventions as at home. You really can't imagine that from scrap, you need to see it with your own eyes. Other than that, everything was organised much more professionally, and there was so much more to see and experience. Lastly there were so much pictures taken of us, in the Netherlands they don't do that so often. We could be posing for 5 minutes, and people would just keep getting their camera's to snap some shots.

"Japan Expo, you need to see it with your own eyes!"





You have sold at smaller conventions in the Netherlands before you went to Japan Expo as a vendor, do you think that helped you prepare for a huge convention like that?

From the conventions in our home country we have learned how to deal with busy moments, and we work really well together, we need less than a half word to understand what needs to be done. But it is quite impossible to fully prepare for the size of Japan Expo, yet people were patient and we still found the time to explain and talk to people.

What was your overall experience from the convention?

Incredible! We've enjoyed us to the fullest, and are already pumped to go next year. There were so much stands to visit, from big dealers to smaller designers, from different Japanese (combat) sports, to all the new anime and manga series, and game designers.

What style(s) of Lolita do you prefer wearing yourself?

Eline: I prefer to wear gothic Lolita with a classic touch. But lately I have been dressing more to sweet. Two very different style's but I feel very comfortable in both.

Katie: My favourite Lolita style is definitely classic. Yet I sometime tend to go a little sweet, more like a crossover between classic and sweet. The other one is more pirate/gothic. I also feel comfortable in black, and like mixing it with blue or red, and a pirate hat!

If you got to choose someone to collaborate with Fly Away Fashion, who would that be and what kind of collab would you like to do?

This differs a little bit, it would be fun to make a special clothing line together with another indi brand with a mix of our tastes. But we would also like to collaborate with a brand or indi designer of another (not Lolita) Japanese fashion style. Although the space in our current shop is limited, once we've expanded we would like to collaborate with others if they are interested.

In June there was the tea party you hosted, in July your presence at Japan Expo, what's next?

(editor's note: you can read a review of that tea party in BCM 7)

At the end of August we've had our last convention for this 'season', as we call it. Now we have no conventions till the beginning of February, yet we will not come to a halt! We are using that time to expand our current collection in the shop and putting it online. In November we will have our winter tea party again, and want to present more new products and already give a sneak peek to the summer lines. And lastly we want to stock our shop up with our recently launched 'Letters From Paris' line.

Where do you hope to be with your label this time next year?

We want our shop and webshop to be stocked up with our latest collections and be innovative and original with them. Besides that we want to be more known with the international Lolita's, since we've got such good response from abroad. Lately we even had orders from Australia, the other side of the world! In our home county we would be known for hosting the biggest and most fun tea parties of the year and to be a place for beginning as well as experienced Lolita's. Next year we are hoping to expand our shop to bigger proportions and also make the step to importing products from Japanese Lolita brands. To make a long story short: do our best to keep our growth going.

Any words of advice to aspiring designers out there?

Make sure to look for the best materials out there to make your products. Don't be afraid to make mistakes, don't always follow the guidelines and don't become a copycat. Originality and creativity will be rewarded! Present your products in a clean and professional way and make sure to open your own webshop only when you are fully prepared for it. Just be out there, keep the passion alive and live your dream!

Official website (including the webshop):
<http://www.flyawayfashion.com>

Interview by Hilde Heyvaert
 Photos courtesy of Fly Away Fashion.

FAVOURERED FILMOGRAPHY

In this section of BCM members of the Belgian Cupcakes take the time to talk about their personal favourites of Japanese cinema and television.

REALLY DRAMATIC: JAPANESE DRAMA

By Claire Van Laere

I started watching Japanese drama series out of curiosity. At Japanese evening school everyone was talking about them. It hooked me like a fisherman hooks a tuna-fish, these series are awesome. Japanese drama series can be compared to soap operas. They involve some over-acting and handle themes like Friendship, love and a popular theme is girls pretending to be boys. There even are a lot of dramas based on popular manga. I've watched an awful lot of drama series and these are my five personal favourites.



Hana-Kimi

Hana kimi is a series based on the manga. Ashiya Mizuki was raised in California but comes back to Japan to help her athletics idol, Sano izumi, who quit athletics after an accident. Sano is attending an all boy's school and so she decides to act as a boy and attend the same school, Osaka High. This has some hilarious consequences.

Most of the boys in this school are super hot and they have their own fan club, Hibari four, led by Hanayashiki Hibari, who sees it as their duty to bring happiness to the boys of Osaka High. I think the plot of this drama is kind of average, but there is some really good acting by Oguri Shun and Horikita Maki. The humour in this series is on a high scale, thanks to some hilarious scenes that involve competitions the dorms have to participate in. Get ready for the power of friendship!

Plot: 8/10
Acting: 8/10
Drama: 7/10
Humour: 9/10
Total: 8/10



Nobuta wo produce

This drama series shares it's leading actress with Hana Kimi, this time Horikita Maki plays the gloomy student Kotani Nobuko, who has been picked on since elementary and has no self-confidence what so ever. Even at this school the poor Nobuko gets bullied. She gets help from Kiritani Shuji, who's the popular guy who gets along with everyone and Kusano

Akira who's just a funny guy Shuji hangs out with because he can't get rid of him. Together they try to produce

Nobuko, to make her popular, but their hard work isn't welcomed by everyone. The plot is surprising and refreshing; it's not your typical Japanese high school drama. Friendship is once again an important theme, but I miss some humor. This drama gets an A for effort but they could've done more with the characters.

Plot: 8/10
Acting: 6/10
Drama: 7/10
Humour: 7/10
Total: 7/10



Hana Yori Dango

You might've heard about the popular manga, but here is the live action series! This one will keep your eyes and brain hostage

until the very end. And then there's still a movie to see. The plot twists and turns like a storm and emotions go wild while watching this. The story is about poor Makino Tsukushi, played by Inoue Mao. She got a scholarship for one of the best schools in Japan, where all the rich kids go. This school is ruled with iron fist by F4, four gorgeous boys with powerful parents. They declare war on everyone who disagrees with them or stands in their way, even with Makino. Another thing this show has in its favours is the handsome Oguri Shun who plays the soft hearted Hanazawa Rui, he seems to be the only one who tries to get along with Makino. This show is simply wonderful!

Plot: 10/10
Acting: 9/10
Drama: 10/10
Humour: 8/10
Total: 9/10

Ouran High School Host Club

Yessir! The most popular host club has its own live action series. Just like in the manga and anime series the story revolves around scholarship student Fujioka Haruhi, who has to settle a debt at the Ouran High School Host Club, ruled by its charismatic prince, Suou Tamaki. A club where girls come to enjoy the company of the most handsome boys in school. Haruhi will have to work hard to work off her debt, pretending to be a boy and try to understand this rich folk. I have to say this drama series isn't as dramatic, as it is hilarious! It's all of your favourite episodes in a nice live action package. With some romantic and awkward moments to top the whole thing off.

Plot: 8/10
Acting: 9/10
Drama: 7/10
Humour: 10/10
Total: 9/10



Rich Man Poor woman

This is a currently airing drama series, so I wasn't able to check the whole thing, but what I've seen is great! The plot manages to captivate you in an instant. The story revolves around two protagonists, the rich Hyuga Toru, played by Oguri Shun, who we already know from Hana kimi and Hana Yori Dango. Hyuga made his own small business into a company worth millions and is plucking the fruits of his

labour. And then there's Natsui Makoto, a senior student at Tokyo University, who is desperately looking for a job. Of course when these characters meet each other they clash, in the most hilarious meaning of the word. But I won't tell you more, you'll have to see it for yourself. This series has the most healthy balance between humour and drama I've seen until now. It has a nice variety than keeps you hooked until the end and some heart-warming moments.

Plot: 9/10

Acting: 9/10

Drama: 8/10

Humour: 7/10

Total: 9/10

Note: Since this series is still airing and not completely finished I have rated it on what is out so far.

EMMA - A VICTORIAN ROMANCE

By Lora-Ely Vannieuwenhuysen

One might ask: why on earth would a J-culture magazine with a strong focus on Lolita feature a review of an anime about maids? Don't we have enough trouble fending off the wrong ideas about our fashion without reviews like these? However: this anime is not your typical animated maid story.



The story of Emma is one we all know: two lovers are kept *apart by society and social conventions*. The setting of our story is Victorian London, at the end of the 19th century. One day, a young man named William visits his old governess who he hasn't seen in years. During his visit, he meets his governess' maid, a shy and hardworking girl named Emma. They fall in love, but there is one problem: William is part of the gentry while Emma is a simple chambermaid.

There are a couple of aspects that make this series stand out among her fellow kin. One of those aspects is the characters themselves. They are human beings rather than stereotypes, with realistic personalities and emotions. For example, antagonists are not simply the "bad guys", but make realistic decisions and manage to make you care as much about them as you do about the protagonists. This helps a great deal in making the story as realistic as it is: even though the story is as old as time, it manages well to avoid clichés and has a couple of unexpected turns.

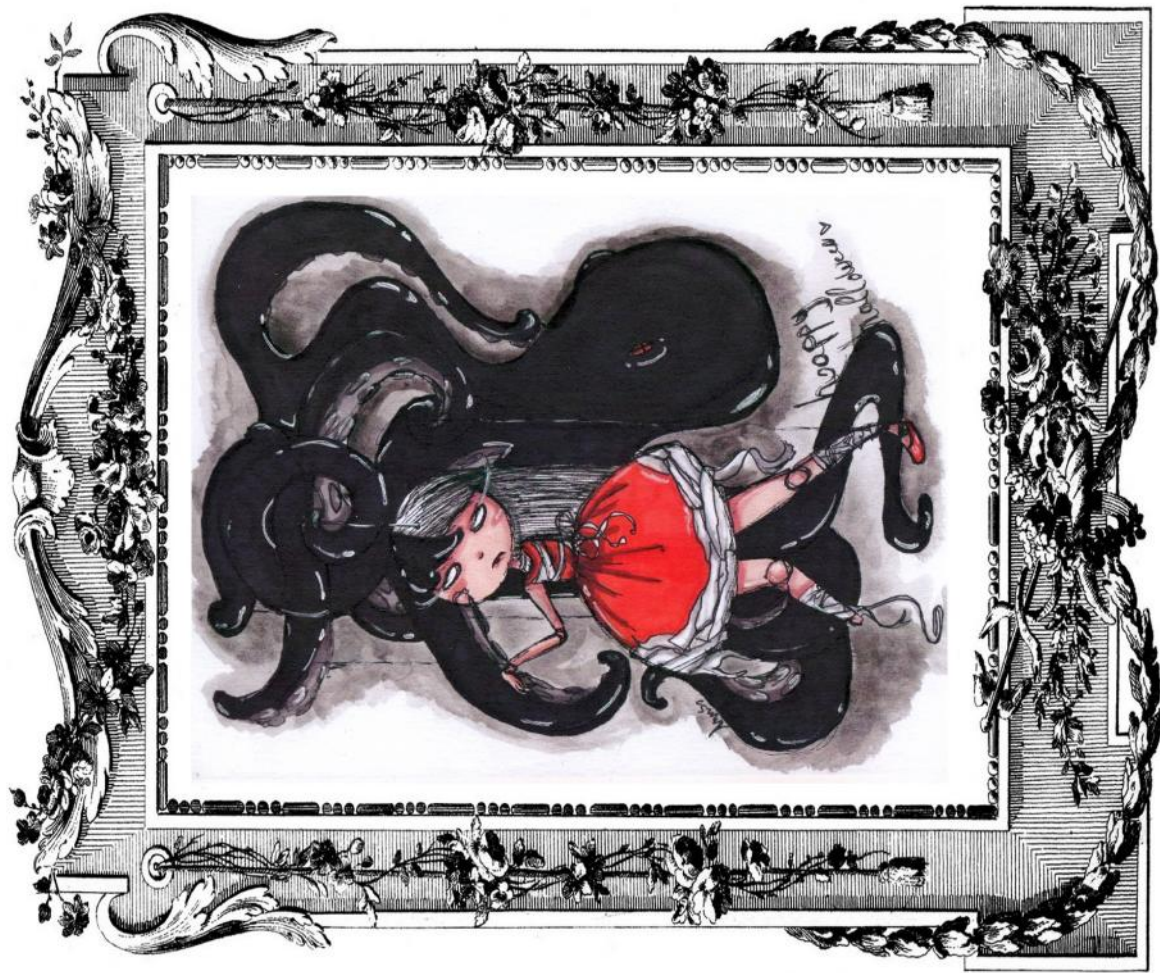
Another aspect is the historical setting of the story. Kaoru Mori has tried to make Victorian England as historically accurate as possible, together with the help of the historian Rico Murakami. This shows itself throughout the series in even the tiniest of details. This aspect of the series is what I personally enjoyed the most.

Let's continue with the technical details. The animation is rather basic and does not do any justice to Kaoru Mori's drawing style. Her manga's are characterized by extreme detail and the ability to tell the reader more with one image than a thousand words could ever manage to do. The anime really misses these aspects. The voice acting is well done, featuring among others voice acting veteran Yumi Touma as Emma.

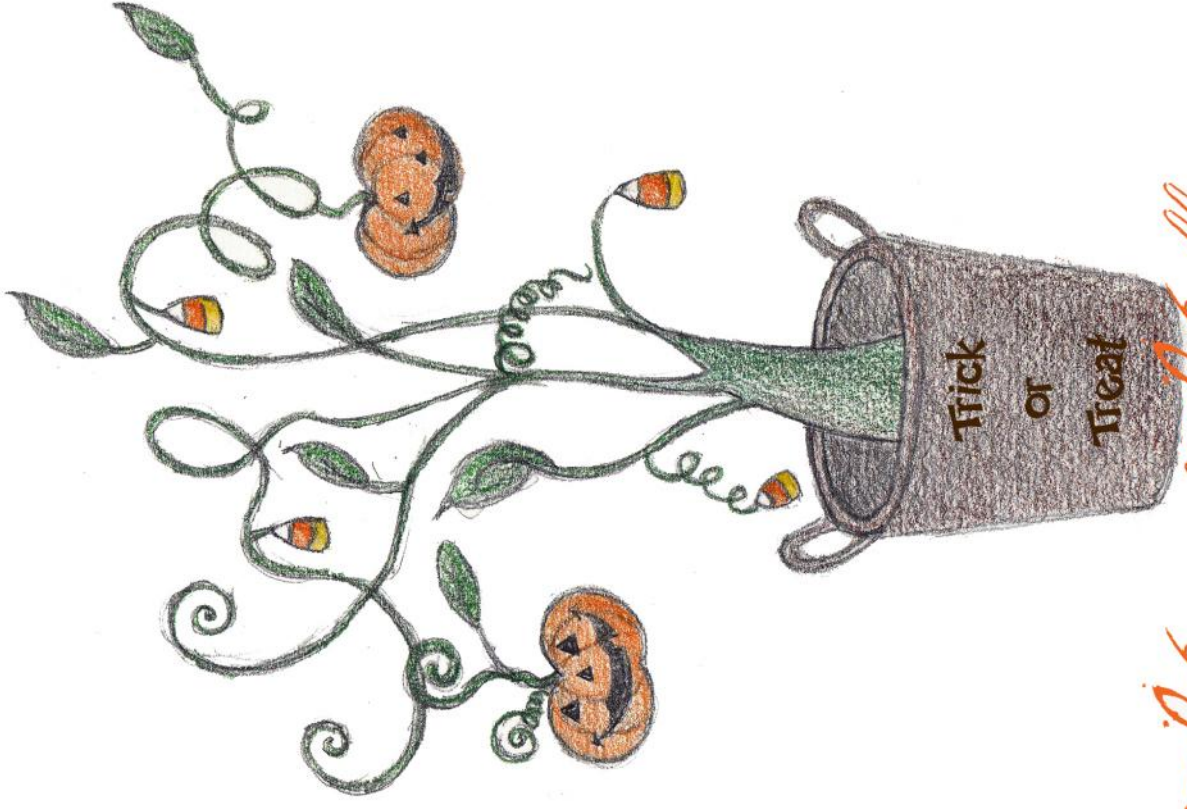
The soundtrack, composed by Ryo Kunihiro, is fully instrumental and fits the atmosphere perfectly.

The anime *Emma - A Victorian Romance*, also known as *Eikoku Koi Monogatari Emma* (英國戀物語エマ), is based on the manga *Emma* (エマ) by Kaoru Mori. The series consists out of two seasons, each twelve episodes. They were released in 2005 and 2007. The manga consists out of seven main volumes and three volumes containing side stories. It ran from 2002 to 2006. Both the manga and the anime have been released in English, by CMX Manga and Animax. There's also a French edition of the manga by Kurokawa.



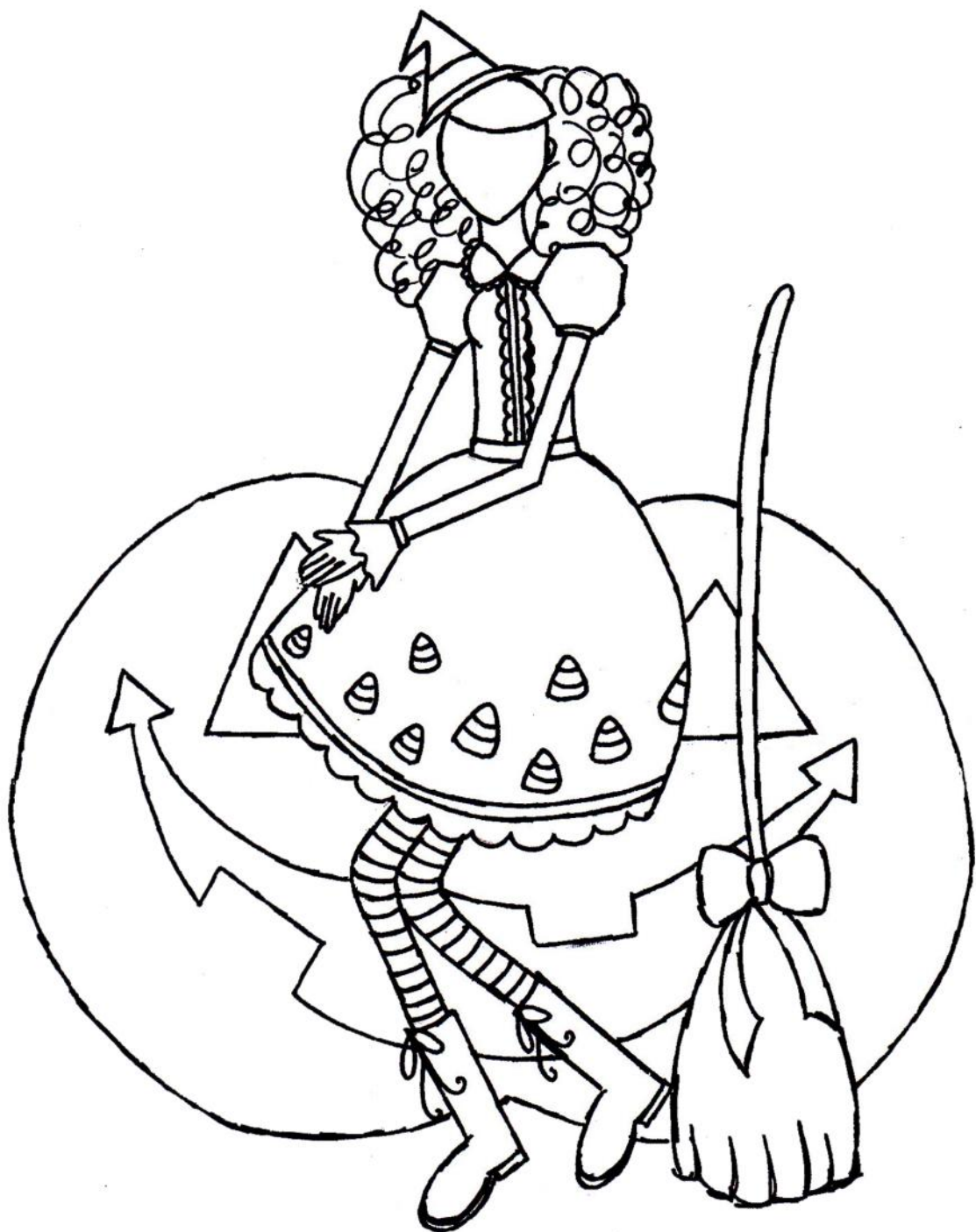


Wishing you a Happy Halloween!



Happy Halloween!

HAPPY HALLOWE'E'N





OUTFIT SNAPS



J-fashion snaps



EVENT CALENDAR

August

INORAN "Seven samurais" European tour
 Date: August 31
 Venue: KGB Club
 City: Stockholm
 Country: Sweden

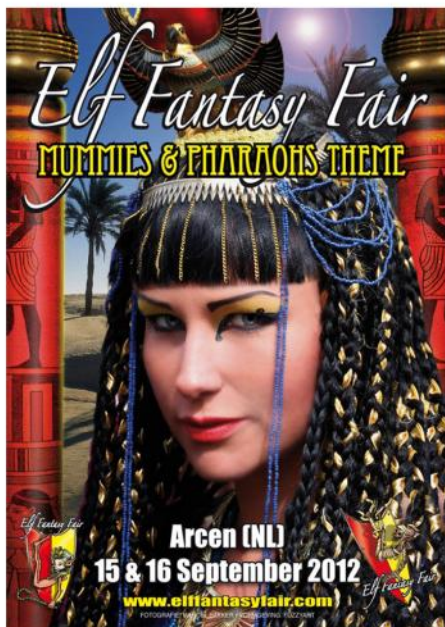
September

INORAN "Seven samurais" European tour
 Tour dates and locations:
 2: Area, Vienna, Austria
 5: MTC Club, Cologne, Germany
 8: Headcrash, Hamburg, Germany
 11: Wig Wam, Venice, Italy
 13: Black Circus, Milan, Italy
 16: Paris Manga & Sci-fi show, Paris, France
 Artist website: <http://inoran.org>
 (click the "show" section for ticket info)

May'n (J-pop) on tour
 Tour dates and locations:
 7: Zeche, Bochum, Germany
 8: Le Divan du Monde, Paris, France
 Artist website: <http://mayn.jp/>

Lix (J-rock concert)
 Date: September 7-9
 Venue: Tegera Arena
 City: Leksand
 Country: Sweden
 Tickets & info: www.rencon.se
 Band website: www.lixaltair.com

Paris Manga & Sci-fi Show
 (J-culture & science-fiction convention)
 Date: 15 & 16
 Venue: Hall 2.1, Paris Porte de Versailles
 City: Paris
 Country: France
 Tickets & info: www.parismanga.fr



October



MGM Expo London

Date: 26 - 28
 Venue: Excel
 City: London
 Country: UK
 Tickets & info:
<http://www.londonexpo.com/>

Crossfaith on tour

Tour dates & locations:
 26: The Libray (HMV Institute), Birmingham, UK
 27: Club Academy, Manchester, UK
 28: Corporation, Sheffield, UK
 29: Garage, Glasgow, Scotland
 30: O2 Academy, Newcastle, UK
 Tickets & info:
<http://japanunderground.wordpress.com/2012/06/12/crossfaith2012return>
 Band website: www.crossfaith.jp

Merzbow (Japanese Noise artist)

Date: 18
 Venue: Kuudes Linja
 City: Helsinki
 Country: Finland
 Tickets & info: <http://www.kuudeslinja.com>
 Artist website: <http://www.merzbow.net>

F.A.C.T.S. (comics, sci-fi & anime convention)

Date: 20 & 21
 Venue: Flanders Expo
 City: Ghent
 Country: Belgium
 Tickets & info: www.facts.be

ZENI GEVA (Japanese Noise concert)

Date: 28
 Venue: Magasin 4
 City: Brussels
 Country: Belgium
 Tickets & info: www.magasin4.be
 Band website: <http://kknnull.com/en>

November

Japan Expo Belgium

(J-culture convention)
 Date: 2 - 4
 Venue: Tour & Taxis
 City: Brussels
 Country: Belgium
 Tickets & info:
www.japan-expo.be

Distant Worlds: Celebrating 2 Years of Final Fantasy

Date: 2
 Venue: The Royal Albert Hall
 City: London
 Country: UK
 Tickets & info:
<http://www.royalalberthall.com>

An Cafe on tour

Tour dates & locations:
 3: MILK, Moscow, Russia
 4: Zal Ojidaniya, St. Petersburg, Russia
 6: Nosturi, Helsinki, Finland
 7: O2 Academy Islington, London, UK
 9: Melkweg, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
 10: FZW, Dortmund, Germany
 11: Theaterfabrik, Munich, Germany
 13: Klub STUDIO, Krakow, Poland
 14: Club 202, Budapest, Hungary
 16: Magazzini Generali, Milan, Italy
 17: Espace Julien, Marseille, France
 18: Bataclan, Paris, France
 20: Astra Berlin, Germany
 Band website:
www.ancafe-web.com

Hyper Japan (J-culture event)

Date: 23 - 25
 Venue: Earls Court
 City: London
 Country: UK
 Tickets & info:
<http://hyperjapan.co.uk>

Shiori Kawana (concert)

Art to Play Festival
 Date: 24 & 25
 Venue: Parc des Expositions d'Exponantes
 City: Nantes
 Country: France
 Tickets & Info:
<http://www.art-to-play.fr>

SUBMISSION RULES

1. Commitment.

When you agree to do something for the magazine, please commit and actually DO it. There's nothing as annoying as people that agree to do something and then don't. Especially right before deadline. Yes people can become ill and life may get in the middle, but the deadline is announced well beforehand and there's really no need to wait 'till the very last moment to submit an article. Generally there is a lot of time for people to submit their pieces. I edit something as soon as I get a piece in, just to make sure that I can get everything done in time and health and life can only provide minimal disturbance. So you're actually doing me a favour by submitting as soon as possible/before deadline.

If someone doesn't submit to an edition without a valid reason or explanation, I reserve the right to set an earlier deadline for the person that hasn't submitted before whilst they committed, to make sure that we get the article in the next magazine they wish to cooperate on. I'm not doing this to hurt feelings or step on toes, but I don't want to give people the opportunity to hijack the magazine (with or without malicious intent). That sounds harsh, I agree, but in my personal experience some people systematically volunteer and never deliver, thus excluding others from the opportunity to submit and keeping the magazine from getting said piece in. It's exactly that I'm trying to avoid by putting rules like these in place.

Being chief editor isn't just all the fun and good times, it is a lot of hard work and sometimes I will have to make harsh decisions and this is one of them. I'm sorry if this upsets someone, that's not my intention, I'm trying to do right by the magazine and especially the people that genuinely want to contribute.

2. Deadlines

Stick to the deadline. They are announced well in time. You can not only find it right here, but also on the very last page of the magazine. It's easy to find the deadline when you forget when it is.

The deadline for issue 6 is **Sunday, October 28**. We're aiming for a HALLOWEEN release!

Submissions not in my inbox when I turn on my computer the morning of the 29th of June will not appear in the magazine. Plain and simple as that. Respect the deadline people!

The reason behind this is simple: not only does everyone have ample time to meet the deadline; from experience I know that extending it means that the magazine is likely never to happen.

Also: editing takes a lot of work, so if I want to release in a timely manner after the deadline I can't wait for articles 'till Hell freezes over.

3. Submitting

All entries for the magazine must be submitted by email on hildekitten@gmail.com

That is also the address where you can reach me with questions, remarks etc etc etc.

If you have an idea for the next edition, don't hesitate to let me know!

Do not send me forum PMs, I don't do pm and your message won't be answered, but I do answer my email so you can reach me on there without problems.

When you submit artwork or photos, they must be at least 2000 pixels and jpg files.

(e.g. a photo of 1333 x 2000 or 1500 x 2000 works fine, everything larger too, everything smaller may become problematic at final edit). Files that are too small are no use to me so please take that into account.

Also, be mindful of quality, I cannot stress this enough!

ONLY submit pieces you have the right to submit. If someone complains about copyright infringement over a piece you've submitted I will send these people to you. This is YOUR responsibility and you will be held accountable in an infringement case.

As far as the **spelling** is concerned, we do NOT allow text speech, texts written like you speak or things filled with purposefully bad spelling. Everyone makes mistakes and that's not an issue, hopefully those mistakes will be caught during the proofreading (not everything gets caught though; we're all only human after all).

That aside, everyone can operate a spell check I'm sure, please do that before submitting an article. It gets rid of the more obvious mistakes and makes life easier for proofreaders and editor alike. It's just a matter of common courtesy.

About **photography and art**: I am aware that not everyone is equally talented. It is in no way so that one needs to have some kind of art degree to be allowed to submit to the magazine. We may not expect a degree, but we do, however, expect a certain quality. It doesn't matter that you don't have professional materials, just do your very best to submit things that are presentable.

Next issue:

Next issue will be the spanning the months November and December 2012, it will be our first ever Christmas edition!

Event report: Abunai
Meet report: September
Event report: Elf Fantasy Fair Arcen
Event report: Paris Manga & Sci-fi show
Meet report: October
Event report: F.A.C.T.S.

Cupcake Focus: Marjan
Style Spotlight: Mori-kei

Lolita Extraordinaire: Miss Kittiness

Artwork

Cupcake Snap

Christmas greeting card
Lolita Day greeting card

Interviews, reviews of bands and concerts in our J-music Corner.
Plus concert reviews of INORAN's SEVEN SAMURAI tour
+ part two of our interview
with INORAN himself!

